

Statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for the fourth quarter of 2023

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) today (March 4) released the statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for the fourth quarter of 2023.

In the fourth quarter of 2023, total port cargo throughput decreased by 8.8% to 43.8 million tonnes over a year earlier. Within this total, inward port cargo and outward port cargo decreased by 6.0% and 13.5% to 28.3 million tonnes and 15.6 million tonnes respectively.

For 2023 as a whole, total port cargo throughput decreased by 9.0% to 174.9 million tonnes over a year earlier. Within this total, inward port cargo and outward port cargo decreased by 7.7% and 11.1% to 111.7 million tonnes and 63.2 million tonnes respectively.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, total port cargo throughput decreased by 3.6% in the fourth quarter of 2023. Within this total, inward port cargo and outward port cargo decreased by 2.6% and 5.5% respectively compared with the preceding quarter. The seasonally adjusted series enables more meaningful shorter-term comparison to be made for discerning possible variations in trends.

Port cargo

In the fourth quarter of 2023, within port cargo, seaborne and river cargo decreased by 8.2% and 9.9% to 28.3 million tonnes and 15.5 million tonnes respectively over a year earlier.

In the whole year of 2023, within port cargo, seaborne and river cargo decreased by 11.4% and 3.8% to 115.1 million tonnes and 59.7 million tonnes respectively over a year earlier.

Comparing the fourth quarter of 2023 with a year earlier, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Vietnam (-28.1%), Japan (-22.8%), Malaysia (-14.4%) and Taiwan (-10.9%). For outward port cargo, double-digit increase was recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Australia (+57.4%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Korea (-30.8%), the United States of America (-27.7%), the mainland of China (-20.8%), Taiwan (-17.5%) and Japan (-15.2%).

Comparing the whole year of 2023 with a year earlier, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Vietnam (-30.0%), Japan (-23.8%), Taiwan (-23.4%) and Korea (-17.8%). For outward

port cargo, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in the United States of America (-32.9%), Taiwan (-29.2%), Korea (-22.7%), Japan (-20.8%) and Vietnam (-16.1%).

Comparing the fourth quarter of 2023 with a year earlier, double-digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo of "petroleum, petroleum products and related materials" (+15.7%), "coal, coke and briquettes" (+11.2%), "metalliferous ores and metal scrap" (-13.7%) and "machinery" (-15.4%). As for outward port cargo, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of "live animals chiefly for food and edible animal products" (-25.7%), "artificial resins and plastic materials" (-24.5%), "stone, sand and gravel" (-15.1%), "machinery" (-11.9%) and "metalliferous ores and metal scrap" (-10.8%).

Comparing the whole year of 2023 with a year earlier, double-digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo of "petroleum, petroleum products and related materials" (+23.8%) and "machinery" (-16.1%). As for outward port cargo, double-digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of "stone, sand and gravel" (+11.9%), "live animals chiefly for food and edible animal products" (-13.1%), "artificial resins and plastic materials" (-14.9%) and "machinery" (-17.6%).

Containers

In the fourth quarter of 2023, the port of Hong Kong handled 3.61 million TEUs of containers, representing a decrease of 10.8% over a year earlier. Within this total, laden and empty containers decreased by 12.4% and 4.9% to 2.79 million TEUs and 0.82 million TEUs respectively. Among laden containers, inward and outward containers decreased by 14.0% and 10.4% to 1.48 million TEUs and 1.31 million TEUs respectively.

For 2023 as a whole, the port of Hong Kong handled 14.40 million TEUs of containers, representing a decrease of 13.7% over a year earlier. Within this total, laden and empty containers decreased by 15.0% and 8.4% to 11.32 million TEUs and 3.08 million TEUs respectively. Among laden containers, inward and outward containers decreased by 16.5% and 13.3% to 6.05 million TEUs and 5.27 million TEUs respectively.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, laden container throughput decreased by 2.6% in the fourth quarter of 2023. Within this total, inward and outward laden containers decreased by 3.8% and 1.3% respectively.

In the fourth quarter of 2023, seaborne and river laden containers decreased by 9.5% and 18.5% to 1.96 million TEUs and 0.84 million TEUs respectively over a year earlier.

In the whole year of 2023, seaborne and river laden containers decreased by 14.3% and 16.9% to 8.03 million TEUs and 3.28 million TEUs respectively over a year earlier.

Vessel arrivals

Comparing the fourth quarter of 2023 with a year earlier, the number of ocean vessel arrivals increased by 4.9% to 4 841, with the total capacity also increasing by 15.0% to 77.2 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals increased by 57.6% to 20 485, with the total capacity also increasing by 10.8% to 20.1 million net tons.

Comparing the whole year of 2023 with a year earlier, the number of ocean vessel arrivals increased by 12.7% to 18 867, with the total capacity also increasing by 24.0% to 301.5 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals increased by 46.5% to 73 331, with the total capacity also increasing by 13.5% to 74.7 million net tons.

Further information

Port cargo and laden container statistics are compiled from a sample of consignments listed in the cargo manifests supplied by shipping companies and agents to the C&SD. Vessel statistics are compiled by the Marine Department primarily from general declarations submitted by ship masters and authorised shipping agents. Pleasure vessels and fishing vessels plying exclusively within the river trade limits are excluded.

Table 1 presents the detailed port cargo statistics.

Table 2 and Table 3 respectively present the inward and outward port cargo statistics by main countries/territories of loading and discharge.

Table 4 and Table 5 respectively present the inward and outward port cargo statistics by principal commodities.

Table 6 presents the detailed container statistics.

Table 7 presents the statistics on vessel arrivals in Hong Kong.

More detailed statistics on port cargo, containers and vessels are published in the report "Hong Kong Shipping Statistics, Fourth Quarter 2023". Users can browse and download this publication at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1020008&scode=230).

For enquiries about port cargo and container statistics, please contact the Electronic Trading Services and Cargo Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 2582 2126 or email: shipping@censtatd.gov.hk). For enquiries about vessel statistics, readers may contact the Statistics Section under the Planning, Development and Port Security Branch of the Marine Department (Tel: 2852 3662 or email: st-sec@mardep.gov.hk).